AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the abstract with the following amended abstract:

An acceleration apparatus is adapted to operate in a direct mode and a proxy mode. In the direct mode, the acceleration apparatus decrypts data packets received from a client and forwards the decrypted data packets to a server using a communication session negotiated by the client and the server. In the proxy mode, the acceleration apparatus responds to the client on behalf of the server and forwards the decrypted data packets to the server using a communication session negotiated by the acceleration device and the server. The acceleration apparatus automatically switches from the direct mode to the proxy mode upon detection of a communication error associated with the communication session negotiated by the client and the server.

~~A method for secure communications between a client and a server. The method includes the steps of managing a communications negotiation between the client and the server; receiving encrypted data packets from the client; decrypting each encrypted packet data; forwarding unencrypted data packets to the server; receiving data packets from the server; encrypting the data packets from the server; and forwarding encrypted data packets to the client. In a further embodiment, an apparatus communicating with a client via a public network and communicating with one of a plurality of servers via a secure network is disclosed. The apparatus includes a network communications interface, at least one processor, programmable dynamic memory, and a communications channel coupling the processor, memory and network communications interface. In addition, the apparatus includes a client/server open communications session manager, a client secure communication session manager, a client/server secure communications session tracking database; and a data packet encryption and decryption engine.~~